GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2016
Indians Stranded in Iraq
Reddy,Kotha Prabhakar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Indian workers are stranded in Erbil in Iraq as their visa has lapsed and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether any representation has been received by the Ministry in this regard and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to rescue the Indians and bring them back to India?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI M. J. AKBAR)

(a) Yes. As reported by the Indian Consulate, Erbil, Iraq, 55 Indian workers were stranded in Erbil, Iraq, as their visas had lapsed. This had happened because their employers did not renew their visas and residency permits. As per local rules effective from March 2016, any individual who has overstayed the visa can exit Kurdistan only after payment of a penalty of US$ 800/- per month for the period of overstay.

(b) The Indian Consulate in Erbil has recently received representations from the stranded Indian nationals and an NGO from Telengana.

(c) The Consulate had approached the host Government for repatriation of these Indian nationals who have over-stayed their visas. The issue was taken up by the Consul General during his meetings with the Prime Minister and the Interior Minister of Kurdistan. As a result of these efforts, a group of 19 Indian nationals has travelled back to India on November 10, 2016, without payment of any overstayal penalty. The Consulate is also contacting the remaining 36 individuals to reconfirm their consent to be repatriated to India so that the host Government may be requested to facilitate their repatriation.